

LACDMH PRESENTS SUICIDE AND MENTAL HEALTH SUMMIT

By Karen Zarsadiaz-Ige, LACDMH Public Information Officer



With the recent headlines of suicides by high-profile individuals and athletes drawing more attention to the subjects of suicide and mental health, the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health (LACDMH) partnered with the Los Angeles County Office of Education (LACOE) to present the summit entitled Two Lives a Day Lost in Los Angeles: Communicating about Suicide & Mental Health.

“If people leave the summit with a sense of what we can do and how we can use communication and social media to help people with mental health issues to get effective resources, we can change someone from choosing self-destructive things. That’s the important message,” said LACDMH Medical Director Roderick Shaner.



Held on Monday, September 10th at the California Endowment Center in downtown Los Angeles, Los Angeles County public information officers, mental health and school leaders and the media were invited to the summit. At the event, attendees learned how to responsibly report about suicide and mental health through best practices, participated in interactive workshops, and listened to how journalists covered suicide and mental health stories for their broadcasts.

Dr. Shaner welcomed the attendees and gave the opening remarks. He was followed by Stephanie Abrams, the Director of Social Media for the Los Angeles Unified School District, who delivered the morning keynote address. After a brief break, concurrent workshops on recommendations for reporting on suicide were led by Anara Guard and Sandra Black of the Education Development Center, Inc.(EDC) and Nedra Kline Weinreich of the Entertainment Industries Council, Inc. (EIC)



After the workshops, Richard Lieberman from the Los Angeles County Office of Education/Center for Distance and Online Learning moderated a media roundtable discussion with invited speakers and panelists, including Univision Reporter Julio Cesar Ortiz, KNX 1070 News Editor David Singer, Anara Guard from the EDC, Nedra Kline Weinreich from the EIC and LACDMH Public Affairs Director Kathleen Piché.

Attendees at the summit were given flash drives with mental health and suicide prevention resources as well as best practices on how to report and deliver information on suicide. A resource and exhibit room was also available during the summit.



This year's event was presented by LACDMH, LACOE and the Entertainment Industries Council, with support from the Mental Health Services Act (Proposition 63), administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA).